

The Rabbi Search Update

The Rabbi Search Committee is pleased to report that a lot of progress has been made since last month. We submitted our completed application to the Rabbinical Placement Commission of the UAHC and HUC in early November, and have begun receiving resumes. In December three members of our committee attended the UAHC Biennial in Florida and met many prospective candidates who expressed interest in applying. Committee co-chair Alex Ingersoll also met with Rabbi Sher of the Placement Commission to further discuss our unique community.

This month we will begin reviewing the resumes we received and do a preliminary screening. Please be on the lookout for monthly updates on our progress and be sure to let us know your thoughts and feelings either by phone, in writing or by sending an email to the Rabbi Search address.

Music in the Mishkan

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav is delighted to announce the inaugural season of Music in the Mishkan, a chamber music series. Violinist Randy Weiss, CSZ member and assistant concertmaster of the San Jose Symphony, is organizing the series and has invited his friends and colleagues from around the Bay Area to join him in Sunday afternoon concerts. Collaborating musicians include: Ruth Rainero, Soprano and CSZ member; Michael Corner, Principal Clarinetist of the San Jose Symphony; Patricia Whaley, Assistant Principal Violist of the San Jose Symphony; and Brian Gordon, piccolo player in the Phoenix Symphony. The

three programs encompass a wide array of music and chamber music combinations. Especially exciting is the return of The Montclair Duo, Randy Weiss and Patricia Whaley, who have performed two fundraising concerts to benefit CSZ in the past fifteen years.

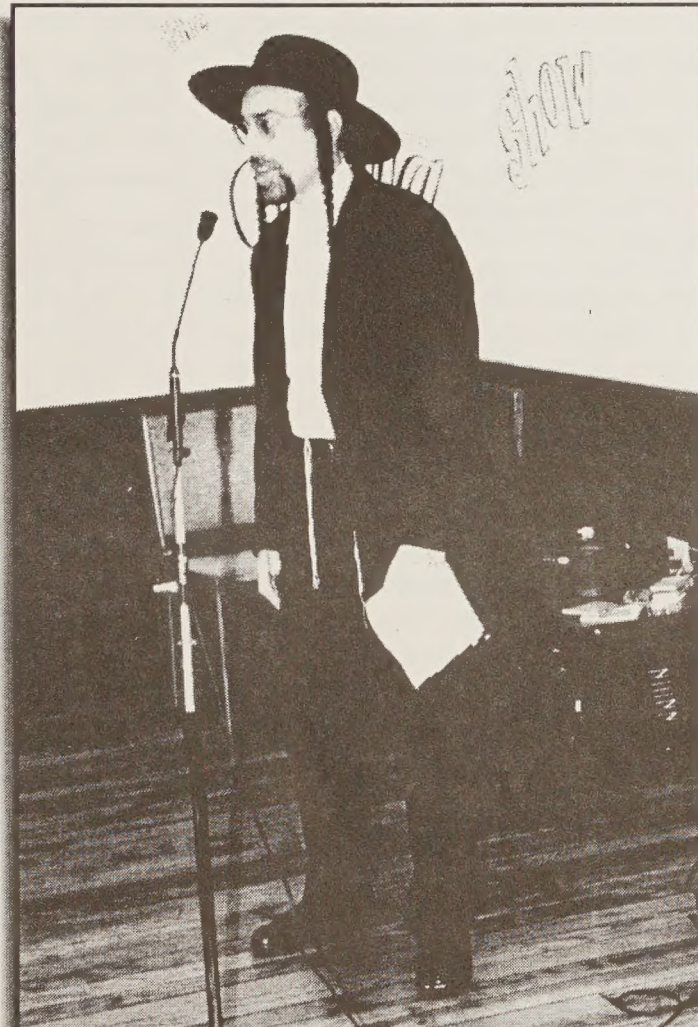
The concert dates are January 30, March 12 and April 23, all Sunday afternoons at 4 pm at CSZ. Mark your calendars and

The Mechanics of Prayer

Ever wonder about the structure behind the prayers of the siddur? Join Rabbi Dorothy Richman for a three-session course exploring the organization and content of a Jewish prayer service. The first session will focus on service warm-ups: kabbalat shabbat and *psukei d'zimra*. In the second session, we will look at the Sh'ma and the blessings which surround it. The Amidah will be the focus of the final class. Each session will include chevruta study (learn-

ing with a friend), in which we will look carefully at the words of the prayers. Find new friends or bring one! The sessions will meet on Wednesday nights from 7:30 - 9:00 pm on January 12, 19, and 26. The class is free to CSZ members and \$10 per session for non-members, or \$25 for the series. You are welcome to attend one or all of the sessions. Some knowledge of the siddur is helpful, but not necessary. All levels are welcome!

Joe Hample performs at Gong Show, photo by Michael Bettinger



*Our Chanukah Party was a huge success!
See article on page 3 for details.*

order your tickets now. To purchase advance tickets, please call CSZ Program Director Dahlia Gross (575-4961).

Migrant Cuisine and Culinary Assimilation

There is still time to register for this class. Learn to cook Jewish cuisine from Italy, Greece and the Middle East. In each class two to three dishes will be created and consumed. Cost is \$15 for the three class series. Call Dahlia Gross to register (575-4961).

President's Column —



David Gellman

When you are approached to serve as president of Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, they tell you about the fabled "perks" of office: The limo, the yacht, the gold card, the townhouse. It is only after your installation that your first discover that the "limo" is a skateboard with one wheel missing, the "yacht" floats in your bathtub, the "gold card" and "townhouse" are equally illusory.

One privilege which did not disappoint me, however, was my introduction to an on-line discussion group for the presidents of Reform congregations throughout the country; a place where we can exchange ideas, ask questions, give advice, learn from past mistakes, and generally share our experiences. Many congregational presidents serve relatively short terms of office; having the ability to network helps each of us avoid some of the pitfalls that have bamboozled other congregations.

My first reaction to this forum was one of skepticism: We at CSZ have a unique history; we are unlike any other mainstream congregation; we have our own minhag (traditions); our GLBT outreach sets us apart from other congregations in the Reform Movement; our demographics are atypical; "We" have nothing in common with "Them." Shows you how wrong you can be.

After several months of reading the comments from presidents of congregations ranging in size from 20 to over 1,900, from Maine to North Dakota, in cities, suburbs and well beyond, I am astounded by how much we have in common with our sibling congregations throughout America. A sample of discussion topics in just the last five months:

How kosher should our synagogue's kitchen be?

Should we hire members as part of our paid staff?

How can we raise funds for a new building?

What is the role of the non-Jew in the congregation?

How do we facilitate Congrega-

Rabbi's Column —



Rabbi Richman

It is an auspicious time of beginnings. The secular calendar flips to a fresh page with lots of zeros. But also, on the twenty-second of this month, we celebrate the New Year for trees, Tu b'Shevat. The Talmud recognizes that beginnings are mysterious times of possibility and danger; it cautions: "all beginnings are difficult".

Many Jews celebrate Tu b'Shevat by planting trees (join the Social Action Committee planting!). When we plant trees, we do so knowing that the future of the sapling is uncertain. It will need encouragement from the sun and from

spirit. The Jewish tradition teaches that every blade of grass has its own angel that bends over it and whispers, "Grow, Grow".

Now, in my own beginning at CSZ, I have already been helped by many members whispering encouragement as I orient myself to this special community. I look forward to getting to know more of you in the months ahead and to making myself available to you as a resource in the learning, simchas, challenges, and transitions to come.

May January find us present to ourselves and to each other.

Rabbi Dorothy A. Richman
Rabbinical Counselor
and Consultant



Harry Potter Comes to Sha'ar Zahav

Sha'ar Zahav's book group, the Fiction Connection, reads a wide variety of books. Expanding its choices even further is the selection for January, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*. So what is the gay or Jewish element in this work? Well, anybody who ever felt misunderstood as a child and longed for a magic world where he or she fit in should read the book and come for a wonderful time with the Fiction Connection at their next meeting, January 6 at 7:30 pm. Contact Bill Goldstein at 510/793-4283 for more information.

tion/Rabbi communication?

Should we limit our membership to preserve a certain size congregation?

Should we offer first time membership incentives?

Should there be an approved caterer for social functions?

How do we address child decorum in the sanctuary?

How do we notify members of a congregant's death?

What kind of leadership training do we offer congregants?

How do we recognize donors?

What level of security is appropriate?

Where should the bimah be (re-)located?

And even:

Must I invite all of the board members to my child's bar/bat mitzvah dinner party?

Although we often focus on what makes

us different and special, in reality we are more like our parents' shuls* than many of us care to admit. We have a common heritage with the congregations and families that brought us into this world. The practical problems faced by Reform congregations are often far more similar than different. And to a very real extent, "special" congregations, including our own, have influenced other shuls nationwide, even globally, on issues such as diversity, liturgy, and lay leadership.

I am enjoying this unique chance to discover how much I am a part of the world after so many years of feeling myself to be an outsider. I am grateful for the opportunity you have given me, and thank you most earnestly. I will keep this in mind while I am playing with my yacht.

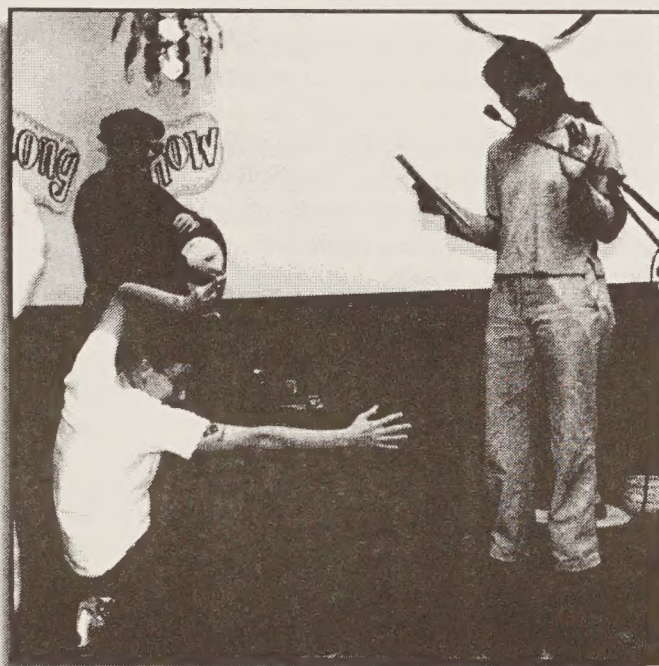
* If you are a Jew by choice, I am obviously not referring to your parents' shul, but to the Mendelmans', down the block.

Chanukah Party a Success!

Sha'ar Zahavniks filled the synagogue on December 4, celebrating the second night of Chanukah and coincidentally the congregation's one year anniversary in the new building. At the beginning of the evening, children were mesmerized by tales of Chanukah; they then moved into a family-oriented arts and crafts project. Dozens of menorahs were set up in the sanctuary, each unique and somehow reflecting its family of origin. Havdalah and candle lighting provided an opportunity for the entire congregation to come together. One of the highlights of the evening was Geoff Benjamin and his version of The First Ever Jewish G/L/B/T Gong Show. Sha'ar Zahav truly has a unique blend of performers, ranging from the Kane-Fishman family delivering its rendition of Adam Sandler's Chanukah Song, to Chaya Rivka and the Rivkettes, to Danny

Kodmur and his Woody Allen monologue. Such talent deserves prizes and, thanks to many generous folks in our community, we had plenty. Todah Rabah to Bi-Rite Market on 18th and Dolores and to A Different Light Bookstore on Castro for gift certificates, to Mary Wings, author of steamy lesbian mysteries, for donating a few of those, and to Karlyn Lotney a.k.a. Fairy Butch

for two tickets to the Hanukah Hoe-down at the CoCo Club. We all know a Jewish party would not be a party without food, especially latkes on Chanukah. An enormous thank you to Danna Zeller who grated potatoes and fried potato latkes for eight straight hours. Also to Johanna Quasluosky and Schmulik Kane-Fishman for their assistance in the kitchen. Thank you to the committee members who have not yet been named: Mark Miller, Alan Gordon, Jen Markowitz and Elise Fineberg, and to all the volunteers who led rituals and all the folks who were brave enough to withstand the severe judgment by the Gong Show judges - Ritual: Rabbi Dorothy Richman and Caryn Aviv (havdalah) and Karen Ehrlichman (Chanukah candle lighting). Gong Show - Kane-Fishman family, Danna Zeller, Dahlia Gross and Beth Sousa, Joe Hample, Leah Salem and Lisa Ochs, Tiela Chalmers, Clarissa Kripke, Chaya Rivka Mayerson, Tony Harris, Mark Gershman, Danny Kodmur, Susan Unger, Mike Bromberg, Robert Ayala, Rabbi Dorothy Richman, Michael Schwartz and Megan Saperstein.



Dahlia Gross, Danna Zeller and Beth Sousa perform at Gong Show

Photo by Michael Beltinger

Other Social Action News

Sha'ar Zahavniks volunteer at The Dolores Street Shelter a few times each year. The shelter houses men who have recently arrived from Mexico and Central America and who do not have shelter or food of their own as yet. Thanks to several of our members, the men receive not only a hot, home-cooked meal, but also the warmth and joy of human interaction. Thank you to those who volunteered this past November: Pam Miller, Zack Miller, Jackie Mauro, Thea Mauro, Alexis Matza, Lee Rubin, Sarita Groisser, Meredith Fenton, Dahlia Gross and CSZ Social Action co-chair Allan Berenstein.

Thanks to all of you who participate directly in social action events. There are other ways of helping too. This past month, Sha'ar Zahav's Social Action Fund donated money to our neighbors in the Cohen House, a home for people with AIDS, to paint their new fence. Thanks CSZ!

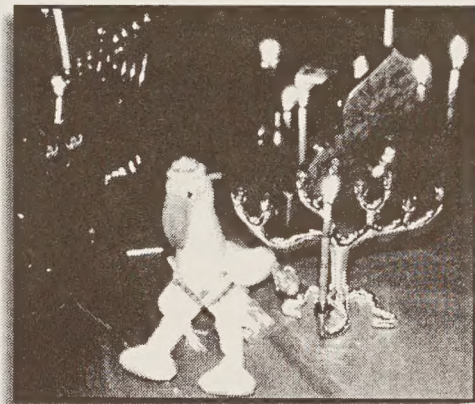


Photo by Michael Beltinger

FEBRUARY FORWARD DEADLINE MONDAY, JANUARY 3

ADVERTISING

To place a display ad, contact Roslyn Fuerman (510/526-1209 or froslyn@earthlink.net). To place a classified ad, call the office.

ARTICLES

Please submit articles via email to brian.jersky@sonoma.edu. If you do not have e-mail, please submit them on a 3.5 inch disk and mail to CSZ. *No late submissions will be accepted without prior approval of the Forward editor.*

Yasher Koach!

Thanks to all of you, CSZ has donated over 600 baggies filled with toiletries. Each bag contains soap, shampoo, conditioner, moisturizer and usually one other item such as a toothbrush or comb to the MCC Shower Project, the Dolores Street Shelter and because of everyone's generosity, Casa De Las Madres. Thanks for your support and keep up the good work. This is an ongoing project; the red bins will remain in the hallway.

Who's on our Bimah and How Did They Get There?

Sha'ar Zahav's Ritual Committee organizes services, trains service leaders, and creates and implements the synagogue's religious policies and philosophies.

The Ritual Committee is open to all CSZ members—you don't need to know how to lead a service or to have had any kind of training. Committee members come from diverse backgrounds: some grew up Orthodox and some grew up in non-Jewish homes; some celebrated becoming b'nei mitzvah at 13, some as adults and some not at all. Some of us joined the committee as soon as we came to CSZ and some of us waited years. Some of us led services before we joined the committee and some of us sat on the committee for a while before taking the plunge into service leading.

A brief survey of Ritual Committee members revealed, not too surprisingly, that among the things we share is the joy we get from our involvement. We learn a great deal from each other and our rabbinical staff about liturgy and Judaism. We also learn together about how a diverse group can move forward as a whole. Over the years, the Ritual Committee has evolved a process which is rooted in mutual respect and values-based decision making.

There are currently more than thirty members of the Ritual Committee. By sharing a little bit about ourselves, we hope to encourage those of you who might be interested in the Ritual Committee to join us at our meetings.

Eileen Levy celebrated her bat mitzvah at Sha'ar Zahav in 1994, when she was

42. Shortly after that, she joined the Ritual Committee in order to learn more about service leading and ritual in general, and to become a CSZ service leader.

Eileen's impression of the Ritual Committee changed a lot after she joined. "I initially saw it as a 'closed group' but that certainly hasn't been my experience. Committee members have been incredibly supportive and welcoming of new members, and people don't seem to stay 'new' for very long!"

Asked what she enjoys most about serving on the committee, Eileen said, "I love the sense of community and camaraderie among the committee members. I love the process by which we make decisions—sensitive, careful, thoughtful, values-based discussions, training for service leaders, mentoring, humor."

Howard Steiermann joined the Ritual Committee this past year. He grew up in a Reform congregation, became a bar mitzvah at 13 and has led services for other Reform congregations, community events and family celebrations.

"I've come to learn that the Ritual Committee really grapples with issues in depth, so as to hear a number of voices, perspectives, feelings and backgrounds," Howard said.

Howard now chairs the Ritual Committee's Service Leaders' Initiative a semi-monthly program for education and training of service leaders and prospective service leaders open to all synagogue members. Howard would like to invite everyone who wishes to learn more about the Torah Service or to hone their presentation skills, to join us for the Service Leaders' Initiatives in March and May.

Mike Rankin grew up in an interfaith family and had no formal Jewish education until he was an adult. Mike's was the first bar mitzvah to be celebrated in our old Danvers Street sanctuary—he was 45. Mike joined the Ritual Committee "about 20 minutes after I first joined CSZ, in 1980....The Ritual Committee and leading services continue to be my primary source of Jewish education."

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Dec. Va'ad Minutes

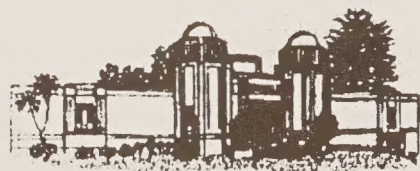
Rose Katz delivered the d'var torah on Parshat Toklot which tells of the births of Jacob and Esau and their lifelong struggle with one another. The battle could be likened to warring nations or to warring parts of the self. Rose suggested that the Parsha reminds us to have compassion for ourselves in our internal struggles toward wholeness.

Laura Lowe and Allan Berenstein of the Social Action Committee led a discussion of their understanding of that Committee's mandate, which they think is focused on concrete mitzvah projects such as helping the homeless and planting trees, rather than political actions, such as the Knight Initiative and gun control, which the Committee does not feel is in its jurisdiction. The Va'ad affirmed Laura and Allan's understanding of the matter. The place for political policy decisions is the Va'ad. CSZ's Shabbat Policy, related to Social Action activities was clarified; activities occurring on Shabbat do not violate the policy if they are not in conflict with Friday night services.

The Building and Grounds Committee proposed the purchase of acoustical panels. This was approved. Building and Grounds will continue to explore ways of dealing with the sound problem between the sanctuary and the library/chapel classrooms. Other building priorities include a security gate on 16th Street and carpeting for the library and chapel. The issue of the colors of the sanctuary can be revisited when it needs a new paint job.

The President of CSZ was authorized to engage the services of Rabbi Dorothy Richman as a part-time Rabbinic Counselor to CSZ until the congregation engages a permanent rabbi or such earlier date as the Va'ad will determine. The position will include pastoral counseling, birth, death and illness lifecycle support, and assistance in both children's and adult education. Rabbi Richman

continued on pg. 10



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Members of the Newsletter Committee

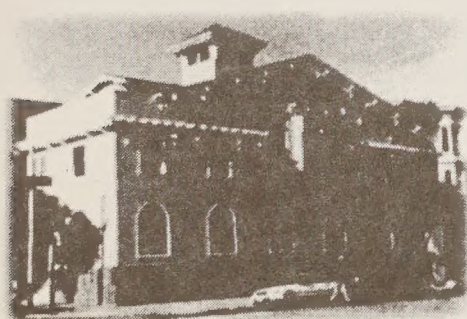
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- Distribution: Mail It Right

Display Ads are \$15 per column inch for nonmembers and \$10 per column inch for members with discounts available for size and frequency. Ads should be camera ready; any ads that require typesetting, camera and/or artwork will be subject to a one-time production charge.

Classified Ads are \$5 for up to 20 words, plus \$1 for each 10 additional words.

Payment must accompany ads and should be sent to Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, 290 Dolores St., San Francisco, California, 94103, marked: attention Forward advertising. we reserve the right to reject any ad.

January 2000 Volume 23, Issue 5.



Thanks and Welcome

The Newsletter Committee extends a heartfelt thank you to Brenda Cummings, Mouse Type, Inc. the Forward's long-time typesetter, who is moving on to new activities.

We welcome Kerri Schiff to our committee as our new designer. Over the next few months we will be implementing some layout changes. Please let us know what you think.

Who's on our Bimah and How Did They Get There?

continued from pg. 4

Patricia Lin didn't grow up with Jewish experiences at home. She chose Judaism. Patricia came to CSZ with service leading experience from the two very different synagogues to which she belonged in London. She's been on the Ritual Committee for three years and joined as soon as she came to CSZ. Patricia appreciates the community and support she finds as a member of the Ritual Committee and sees it as "a group of diverse and committed people who have many different talents and are willing to teach and support each other. You definitely don't need to have yeshiva training to be on this committee."

Jonathan Funk joined both CSZ and the Ritual Committee seventeen years ago. He grew up in Orthodox and traditional Conservative settings and gained experience as a service leader in summer camp and Hillel. Jon has seen the Ritual Committee change significantly during his tenure. "It was once a small, male-dominated group (mostly of an Orthodox or Conservative bent) that ran itself without undue formalities Today the Ritual Committee is quite well balanced in terms of gender, religious background, longevity with the synagogue, etc." Jonathan enjoys his work on the committee because "we tackle varied and interesting issues of a religious and philosophical nature that have a direct impact on our worship and our religious practices. At varying points along the way, I have felt as if the Ritual Committee was like a family of friends who got together regularly and worked on issues of common importance; there has been a nice sense of bonding most of the time."

Ora Prochovnick has been on the Ritual Committee more than ten years and recently served as its Chair. Ora thought about joining the committee for a few years before actually doing so. She joined because she had concerns about how services were not meeting her needs and she wanted to get involved so she could have more input. In the years that Ora has been involved, "the committee has become much more enjoyable. When I joined, it had terrible process (I thought). I find it more supportive now, better dialogue, better at educating ourselves." Ora finds that being on the Rit-

ual Committee makes her feel more a part of the CSZ community.

Lyssa Friedman, the immediate past chair of the Ritual Committee, has been a member for about six years. Lyssa took a service leading class from Rabbi Kahn and then began to lead services. Soon she was invited to join the committee. "I wasn't interested in joining. I was coerced. I'm only partly kidding." Being on the Ritual Committee has deepened Lyssa's relationship to the CSZ community. "It has involved and empowered me, both from the standpoint of feeling bimah empowered in Judaism in general and from the standpoint of being connected to synagogue issues." Lyssa has also seen the committee change during her years here. "Most of all, people's respect for each other and our process have improved significantly."

We hope these brief descriptions of the backgrounds and Ritual Committee experiences of some of our current members reflect the diversity of the Committee and the ways its members came to be involved in the ritual life of CSZ. We invite everyone who is interested in the Committee to contact our chair, Nicole Bloom, or to come to a meeting. Please call the office for contact phone numbers and meeting schedules.

Members' Yahrzeits

- 9 Jerry Davis
- 14 Cheryl Orvis
- 18 Keith Fenton
- 20 George Ash
- 31 Allen Harris

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JANUARY-TEVET/SHEVAT

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

CSZ Monthly Ritual Schedule

Each week, CSZ provides a minimum of four opportunities for you to observe Shabbat within the community. Here is the schedule.

	24 Tevet - 2		25 Tevet - 3		26 Tevet - 4	• 7pm - Newsletter
• 6pm - Newsletter Layout	2 Shevat - 9	• 5:30pm - Buildings and Grounds Committee • 5:30pm - Personnel Committee • 6:30pm - Children's Education Board Meeting • 6:30pm - Va'ad Meeting	3 Shevat - 10	• 7pm - Adult Education	4 Shevat - 11	• 4pm - Kadima • 7:30pm-9pm
• 3pm-6pm - Migrant Cuisine and Culinary Assimilation	9 Shevat - 16	• 7pm - Membership Committee	10 Shevat - 17		11 Shevat - 18	• 4pm - Kadima • 6:30pm - Siddur • 7:30pm-9pm
	16 Shevat - 23		17 Shevat - 24		18 Shevat - 25	• 4pm - Kadima • 7:30pm-9pm
• 4pm - Chamber Music at CSZ	23 Shevat - 30	• 6:30pm - Children's Education Board Meeting	24 Shevat - 31			

From Midrasha

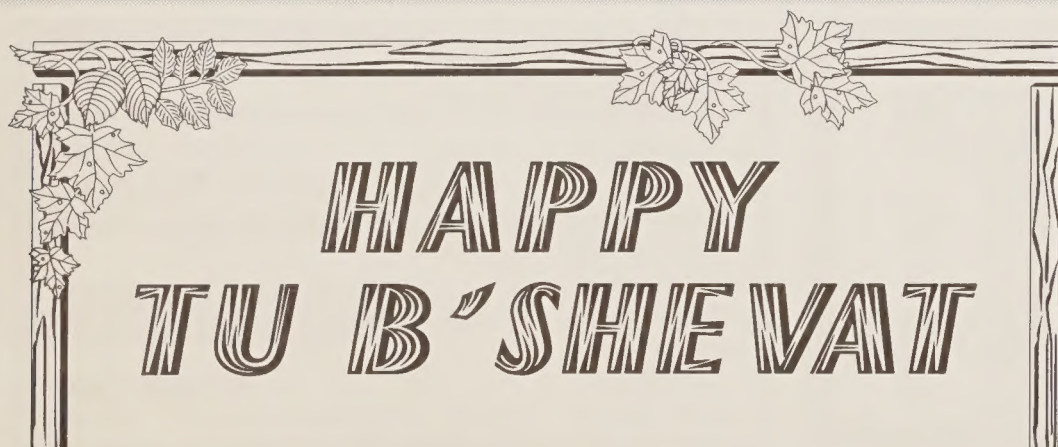
What an incredible semester it has been. We have over 270 students. We had a wonderful parent/student study brunch. Gesharim, Etgar and Keshet have had their first retreats and they were all smashing successes. Our fundraising appeal has brought heartwarming response and the money continues to come pouring in. You have been very generous.

The new semester starts on January 9. If you or someone you know are high school age and haven't been enrolled at Midrasha, this would be a great time to start. Classes this semester are as exciting as ever and include classes on subjects as diverse as Jewish religion, Israeli history and culture, poetry, literature, Hebrew and Yiddish language, and ethics.

In the new year we hope to start gearing up for our annual garage sale. If you have access to a couple thousand feet of vacant commercial space that we can use for six weeks, in exchange for a letter of appreciation and a tax deduction, please let us know.



SPRAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SHABBAT
			Shabbat Shemot <i>23 Tevet - 1</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:15am - Torah Study 10am - Shabbat Services <i>led by Leslie Kane</i> 1pm-2:15pm - Meditation Chavurah
<i>27 Tevet - 5</i> lighting	<i>28 Tevet - 6</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 7:30pm - Fiction Connection 	<i>29 Tevet - 7</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4:48pm - Candle Lighting 8:15pm - Shabbat Services <i>led by Eileen Levy</i> Dor Rishon Brotherhood Dinner 	Shabbat Vaera <i>1 Shevat - 8</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:15am - Torah Study 9:30am - Kadimah 10am - Shabbat Services <i>led by Ruthy Talansky & Howard Steiermann</i> 1pm-2:15pm - Meditation Chavurah
<i>5 Shevat - 12</i> Mechanics Prayer Class <i>Rabbi Richman</i>	<i>6 Shevat - 13</i>	<i>7 Shevat - 14</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4:55pm - Candle Lighting 8:15pm - Shabbat Services <i>led by Nicole Bloom and Tiela Chalmers</i> Oneg - <i>by Marsha Blachman</i> 	Shabbat Bo <i>8 Shevat - 15</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:15am - Torah Study 10am - Shabbat Services <i>led by Robin Leonard</i> 1pm-2:15pm - Meditation Chavurah
<i>12 Shevat - 19</i> Committee Mechanics Prayer Class <i>Rabbi Richman</i>	<i>13 Shevat - 20</i>	<i>14 Shevat - 21</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5:03pm - Candle Lighting 8:15pm - East Bay Shabbat - (see below for details) 8:15pm - Shabbat Services <i>led by Sarita Groisser and Bill Jones</i> 	Shabbat Shira - Tu b'shevat <i>15 Shevat - 22</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9am - Tu b'shevat Tree Planting 9:15am - Torah Study • 9:30am - Kadimah 10am - Shabbat Services <i>led by Tiela Chalmers</i> 10:30am - Tot Shabbat 1pm-2:15pm - Meditation Chavurah 6:30pm-8pm - Community Tu b'shevat Seder at CSZ
<i>19 Shevat - 26</i> Mechanics Prayer Class <i>Rabbi Richman</i>	<i>20 Shevat - 27</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6:30pm - Ritual Committee 	<i>21 Shevat - 28</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5:11pm - Candle Lighting 8:15pm - Shabbat Yitro <i>led by Paul Cohen and Rabbi Richman</i> 	Shabbat Yitro <i>22 Shevat - 29</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 9:15am - Torah Study 9:15am - Kadimah 10am - Shabbat Services 1pm-2:15pm - Meditation Chavurah 4:30pm - Baby Group Havdalah



East Bay Services

Jan. 21 8:15pm

at the home of *Shelley Spiro and Gabriele Kassner* 2431 Burlington, Oakland, CA 94602 510/482-5967

Feb. 18 7:15pm

Shabbat Potluck at the home of *Ida Kuluk, Susan Spott and Evan Kuluk* 4042 Maple Ave., Oakland, CA 94602 510/530-4673

Why Is This New Member Different From All Others?

by Marc Wernick

Columnist's Note: January marks the debut of this new column. As part of reinforcing the haimish (rhymes with Danish: warm, friendly) atmosphere of CSZ, the Membership Committee has decided to profile new members to the synagogue. The column strives not only to help you welcome new members, but also to reinforce the sense of community among the entire congregation. New members wishing to be profiled are welcome to contact the Membership Committee.

This month's profiled new members are Ken Repp and Mike Bromberg. When they heard the title of this column, Ken and Mike quickly pointed out that they are from San Jose. Ken has been living in the Bay Area since 1980 and Mike since 1995. While they declined to share how they met, the highly-skilled investigative reporters at the JGF learned that Ken and Mike just recently became engaged, following the sage advice of a fortune-cookie. While dining at the swank Hong Kong Restaurant with Paul Cohen, Ken's counselor from CSZ in becoming a Jew by choice, Ken shared his fortune-cookie fortune with the table: "Accept the next proposal you receive."

Not missing a beat, Mike got down on one knee and popped the question. And the rest is history.

Ken and Mike have 2 pets: Trouble, an Italian greyhound, and Junior, a 12-year-old tabby. Ken teaches English and Mike is a freelance designer and producer. Before making a home in the Willow Glen area of San Jose, Ken lived in Spokane, St. Louis, Portland and Idaho, in the only city in the US with an apostrophe in its name. Mike has lived in New York, Missouri, Texas and Germany. Mike collects comic books; Ken has no hobbies since undertaking conversion classes.

The *Forward* posed the following four questions to Ken and Mike:

Q. Which biblical character do you most identify with?

A. Without missing a beat, Mike mentioned Jonathan and David. "Not only were they gay but they were so joyous in their love for each other," he explained. Thinking of his job, Ken identifies with Daniel in the lions' den. "One look at your favorite crowd of teenagers and there you have it."

Q. For which sin will you most want forgiveness next Yom Kippur?

A. The couple eschewed the obvious by not mentioning "coveting their neighbor's donkey". Instead, Mike chose greed. "Greed is fun," quipped Mike. Ken agreed but focused on gluttony. "After converting to Judaism, I think I have some heavy chest-beating to do for those bowls of shrimp I have been eating," he clarified.

Q. Which food item best describes your feelings to CSZ?

A. Mike replied, "Mangoes. They are all squishy inside," he explained. Being in the Chanukah spirit when this interview was conducted, Ken responded with latkes. "They are good and crunchy." Mike then asked, "Who at CSZ is crunchy?" The *Forward* reporter was puzzled as well. Who is squishy for that matter?

Q. Describe your earliest religious experience.

A. Mike remembers arguing with his yeshiva teacher. The teacher was trying to explain the principles of kashrut and explained that you must shoo away the mother hen before you take the eggs from her nest. Mike was puzzled, "Why would you bother to do that when you can just go to the supermarket and pick up the eggs there?" Ken mentioned going to the Nazarene Church with his mother to earn a hula hoop. "The church had this point system for rewarding attendance. I got the hula hoop and never went back."

Please join us in welcoming Mike Bromberg and Ken Repp to CSZ.

DOR RISHON is now officially DOR RISHON BROTHERHOOD

Dor Rishon, CSZ's social group for men over 40, has been around for several years. While primarily a group for men, its activities have always been advertised and open to all members of CSZ, men, women and yes, even children. And that still remains true.

The name, which translates to "First Generation", was meant to distinguish those members who were old enough to have

been members of CSZ when it was formed in 1977. But there has been some controversy over the name "Dor Rishon", which some members have interpreted to imply that only men were founding members. So to clarify things, we have added "Brotherhood" to our name. While some people may still colloquially refer to us as Dor Rishon, we are really Dor Rishon Brotherhood. And of course, everyone is still welcome to our events.

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Kadimah Corner



Chanukah Party At CSZ

Nearly all Kadimah students and their families showed up for the annual CSZ Chanukah celebration. Our awesome teacher Jen Markowitz led us in some fun family activities; we then joined everyone else for Havdalah and Menorah lighting in the sanctuary. It was a beautiful and special moment when all the kids and adults in the Congregation lit candles and sang the brachot together. Finally we ate and ate and ate, played

CSZ children celebrate Chanukah, photo by Michael Bettinger



games and watched all the great skits in the Gong Show. It was a wonderful way to celebrate Chanukah with our families, friends, and everyone at CSZ!

Introducing our Kadimah Teachers

In this issue, we are introducing our Kitah Gimel and Hey teachers, Sandra Vaknin and Phyllis Mintzer. This is Sandra's first year teaching at CSZ. She was born in Mexico, and grew up in San Francisco. As an adult, Sandra lived in Israel for many years and has just returned to the Bay Area. She is a very experienced teacher, and has enjoyed working with pre-school-aged kids through high schoolers. Sandra was a

great catch for us and the students in Kitah Gimel just love her.

Phyllis grew up in New York, moved out to San Francisco in the 60s, and has been involved in Jewish education in the Bay Area ever since. Phyllis was one of Kadimah's founders, and is famous for her articles and books. She is the backbone and spiritual leader of our school and an inspiration to us all.

Calling All Babies

What: Baby Havdalah Celebration

When: Saturday, January 29, 4:30 pm

Where: CSZ

For: Babies, babies to be, and all folks who love to hang out with them!

Please join CSZ babies and their families in a very special Havdalah Party. Mimi Greisman, Early Childhood Educator and Sherith Israel's Tot Shabbat facilitator, will join us with her songs and puppets and lots of other fun. A light meal will be provided. Please RSVP to Dahlia Gross, CSZ Program Director (575-4961).

Here's what's going on in January:

Wednesdays		Saturday	
Jan. 5	No School - Winter Break	Jan. 8	Regular Kadimah
Jan. 12	Regular Kadimah	Jan. 15	No Kadimah - Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday.
Jan. 19	Regular Kadimah	Jan. 22	Regular Kadimah - We'll be celebrating Tu b'Shevat.
Jan. 26	Regular Kadimah	Jan. 29	Regular Kadimah

Tot Shabbat

Tot Shabbat, a group for kids 2-4 years old and their families, meets the fourth Saturday of each month at 10:30 am. This month we will celebrate the Holiday of the Trees or Tu b'Shevat. Please join us and tell a friend. All programs take place at CSZ unless otherwise noted. Upcoming Tot Shabbat dates: February 26, March 25 and April 22.

Upcoming Events at Camp Newman

Camp Newman is hosting Winter Shabbat Retreat on the following dates.

- ▶ February 11-13 - Grades 3 & 4
- ▶ March 17-19 - Grades 5 & 6

If you want to go or just need more information, please contact Elise Fineberg at 575-4962.

Thank You Kadimah

I can't believe that its already time for David to return to take back the helm of Kadimah, as I move on to the next phase of my life. These past six months of working with all of you have been just wonderful. I think that all Kadimah parents are very special, and I admire the commitment you have each made to your children. Getting to know students has made this job especially wonderful for me. You are a fantastic bunch of people and I will miss seeing you every week. I have truly enjoyed every moment here and thank you all for giving me this unique opportunity to run your school. Please keep in touch. May you all grow from strength to strength.

Elise Fineberg

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Dec. Va'ad Minutes

continued from pg. 4

joined the Va'ad to say hello and discuss an appropriate title for her new role: "Rabbinic Counselor and Consultant" was chosen.

Lyssa Friedman presented the Personnel Committee's new organizational chart which outlines an egalitarian partnership with the Administrator, the Rabbi, and the President/Lay Leadership at the center. The Va'ad sees the chart as reflecting and clarifying our current organization.

Program Director Dahlia Gross presented her report. The secular new year falls on Shabbat and options for that celebration are being explored and the appropriateness of any recognition of the non-Jewish calendar in a religious context discussed. A Chanukah celebration was planned for December 4. An educational forum on the Knight Initiative, co-sponsored with the LGBT Outreach at Beth Sholom, was scheduled for December 18.

Howard Herman reported from the Joint Subcommittee on Security, which includes representation from the Membership Committee, the Greeter Corps and Kadimah/Children's Education Board. The subcommittee is working to create a balance of being welcoming and being safe. The Va'ad supports the policy that doors be locked at all time unless they are actively staffed. Also discussed were: creating more greeter visibility; developing clearer greeter guidelines; and greeter/security training. The subcommittee is actively wrestling with the question of allowing people to come in and use the bathrooms and invites concerns and opinions on this issue.

Treasurer Arthur Slepian gave his report. We are ahead on revenues largely due to the early Holidays. We are now at 99% of last year's pledges. We remain behind in pledges compared to what we have budgeted for

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Synagogue Information

Congregation Sha'ar Zahav

290 Dolores Street
861-6932 (voice); 861-6081 (fax)
Programming office, 575-4961
Education office, 575-4962
office@shaarzahav.org (email)
http://www.shaarzahav.org (web)

Officers:

President, David Gellman (550-9449),
sfgellman@aol.com or
president@shaarzahav.org)
Vice President, Lisa Katz
Vice President, Lyssa Friedman

Treasurer, Arthur Slepian
Recorder, Sue Bojdak

Va'ad (Board) Members:

Steven Berlin
Diana Buchbinder (ex officio)
Ellie Cohen
Sarita Groisser
Howard Herman
Rose Katz
Robin Leonard
Jacob Rothman
Robert Tat
Ami Zusman

CSZ Staff:

Interim Educator, Elise Fineberg
Administrator, Lea Salem
office@shaarzahav.org
Program Director, Dahlia Gross
cszdahlia@yahoo.com
Kadimah Head Teacher, Phyllis Mintzner
Administrative Assistant, Melanie Kushnir
Youth Advisor, Meredith Fenton
Rabbinical Consultant, Dorothy Richman

Committee Chairs:

Adult Education, Ron Edelman
and Prudence Carter
Archives, open
Baby Chavurah, open
Bequests and Donations, Richard
Inlander
Bikkur Cholim, forming
Bisexual Havurah, Jim Frazin
Book Group, Mark Mackler
Building and Grounds, Arthur Cohen
Bylaws, Richard Inlander
Children's Education Board, Liz Schaffer
Dor Rishon, open
Dues Liaison, open
East Bay Havurah, Ida Kuluk
and Larry Wexler
Endowment Fund, David Stein

Environmental Action, open
Finance, Arthur Slepian
Fine Arts, Bob Gutterman
Fundraising, Jacob Rothman
Gift Shop, Jeff Rubin
Israel Havurah, Ron Lezell
La'atid, Geoff Benjamin
Leadership Development, Paul Cohen
Library, Joan Goldman
Long-Range Planning, Allan Gold
Membership, Joe Hample
Mishkan Dolores Capital Campaign,
Ellie Cohen
Newsletter, Brian Jersky
Past Presidents Council, David Stein
Personnel, Lyssa Friedman
Public Relations, Sharyn Saslafsky
Rabbi Search, Diana Buchbinder
and Alex Ingersoll
Ritual, Nicole Bloom
(bloom@netscape.net)
Social Action, Laura Lowe and Allan
Berenstein
Toddler/Pre-school Havurah, Deena Lahn
UAHC National Liaison, Mike Rankin
UAHC Regional Liaisons, Daniel Chesir
and Robin Leonard
WCGLBJO Liaison, David Gellman
Women's Havurah, open

*Members wishing to contact any Va'ad member or committee chair
are invited to obtain his or her number from the synagogue office.*

Bikkur Cholim: If you or a friend who is a member of Sha'ar Zahav is ill in the hospital or at home, and would like to have a member of the Bikkur Cholim Committee call or visit, please notify the synagogue office.

Member of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and the World Congress of Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Jewish Organizations.

Contributions

Adult Education Fund

Robert and Miriam Stoll, with prayers for the complete healing of Phyllis Mintzer.

AIDS Fund

Allan Berenstein, in memory of Allan Craig.

Allan Berenstein, in memory of Don Albert.

Henri Nielsen, in memory of Bernard Pechter.

Bikkur Cholim Fund

Sharyn Saslafsky, in honor of Allan Berenstein.

Children's Education Fund

Fishman-Kane family, in appreciation of Ron Lezell.

Fishman-Kane family, in appreciation of Rabbi Yoel Kahn.

Robin Leonard and Tory Weiser, with prayers for Phyllis Mintzer's speedy recovery.

Fishman-Kane family, in appreciation of Elise Fineberg.

Fishman-Kane family, with prayers for a complete healing for Phyllis Mintzer.

Allan Berenstein, in memory of Marilyn O'Keeffe.

David Stein and Alex Ingersoll, in memory of Marilyn O'Keeffe.

Education Fund

Allan Berenstein, in honor of Phyllis Mintzer and with wishes for a speedy recovery.

General Fund

Alex Ingersoll and David Stein, in memory of Frank Hyman.

Allan Berenstein, in memory of Ann Radetsky.

Arnie Jackson, in memory of Louis Jackson.

Barbara Bannerman-Olitzky, in memory of Forrest Kincaid.

Barbara, Dafna and Ruby Cymrot-Wu, in memory of Isa Leah Cymrot-Wu.

Brian Jersky, in memory of Leiba Skudowitz and Pauline Jersky.

Daphne Stuart, in memory of Andrew Stuart.

Ellie Cohen, in loving memory of Thelma Fox Chalmers.

Eve Meyer, in memory of Hans Meyer, Marion Meyer, Ron Greene and Renato DeLeon.

Herman and Agnes Pencovic, in memory of Lee Edward Schwartz.

Daphne Stuart, in memory of Forrest Kincaid.

Jon Funk and John Arnold, in memory of Lee Edward Schwartz.

Joseph Hample, in honor of the CSZ staff.

Julie Moed and Shelley Eisenman, in memory of Lee Edward Schwartz.

Lyssa Friedman and Daphne Stuart, in memory of Lee Edward Schwartz.

Marlyn and Larry McClaskey, in honor of Paul Cohen.

Marjorie Hilsenrad, in memory of her Aunt Rose and Uncle Abrasha.

Mel Lehrbaum, in memory of Sylvia Lehrbaum.

Michael Bettinger and Robert Goldstein, in memory of Randy Galterio.

Michael Kay, in memory of George Kay.

Miriam Trentman, in memory of Harry Trentman.

Nancy Meyer and Daniel Meyer-O'Keeffe, in memory of Marilyn O'Keeffe.

Perry Paker, in memory of Meyer Paker.

Robert Katz, in memory of Mario Luna.

Robin Leonard and Tory Weiser, with prayers for strength for Sarita Groisser.

Eli Weinstein, in memory of Forrest Kincaid.

Russell and Carol Tat, in memory of Irene Sherwin.

Ruth Miller, in memory of Forrest Kincaid.

Sharon and Robert Kleigman, in honor of Rachel Kleigman's birthday.

Steve Elman and Tom Holt, in memory of Lee Edward Schwartz.

Lisa Ochs and Lea Salem, in memory of Forrest Kincaid.

Steve Elman and Tom Holt, in honor of the 25th anniversary of David Stein and Alex Ingersoll.

Susan Lee Lubeck, in memory of Benjamin Lubeck.

High Holiday Contributions

Jerry Herman.

Michael Ehrenzweig.

Ami Zusman.

Inclusive Liturgy Fund

Batya Kalis, in memory of Esther Kalis and Dorothy Hodies.

Mishkan Dolores Capital Campaign

Robin Leonard and Tory Weiser, in honor of Walter Leiss' 70th birthday.

Allan Berenstein, in memory of Chuck Norton.

Patricia C. Bigglestone, in memory of Clint Bigglestone.

Becky Dixon, in memory of Rachel Mailman.

Sadie Katz, in memory of Rose Negreann.

Tiela Chalmers, in memory of Thelma Fox Chalmers.

Jerry Rosenstein, in honor of Walter Leiss' 70th birthday.

Ritual Fund

Nancy Meyer, in honor of Susan Unger.

David Stein and Alex Ingersoll, in honor of Rabbi Eric Weiss.

David Stein and Alex Ingersoll, in honor of Dev Noily and Joe Hample.

Harvey Milk Social Action Fund

Allan Berenstein, in memory of Forrest Kincaid.

Allan Berenstein, in honor of Lea Salem.

Oneg & Flower Sponsorship

These generous people sponsored the Oneg Shabbat in recent weeks:

12/10 Oneg by Gabriele Kassner and Shelley Spiro in honor of their 26th anniversary.

Condolences

We extend our condolences to members who have suffered recent losses:

Kyle West on the death of his uncle, Chester "Chet" Tylicki.

Rachel Maclachlan on the death of her aunt, Rhoda Maclachlan.

Judy Schwartz on the death of her father, Lee Edward Schwartz.

Michael Bettinger and Robert Goldstein on the death of their friend, Randy Galterio.

CSZ 101

The Membership Committee is developing an orientation class for new members, also open to longtime members who want to know their synagogue better. We plan to hold five weekly sessions about two hours in length, with different topics and facilitators each week. The suggested syllabus would cover:

1. WHO WE ARE (what CSZ stands for, building tour, why you joined);
2. HOW WE GOT HERE (the origins of CSZ, our congregation in the world, our committees and communications);
3. CSZ LITURGY (the structure of service, prayer and spirituality, holidays and life cycle events);
4. CSZ MELODIES (the songs, the meanings, the tunes);
5. WHERE WE'RE GOING (tradition and values, CSZ constituencies, social action).

Would you be interested in taking (or facilitating) a class like this? Which are the most (and least) appealing topics? Are there other areas we should cover? What days and times would be convenient for you? Please share your ideas with Membership Chair Joe Hample. Call 621-7675 or e-mail HampleJ@WellsFargo.com.

Tikkun Olam - Healing the Planet



In Judaism, Tikkun Olam may take place on a number of levels: healing oneself, one's community or the planet. The holiday of Tu b'Shevat, celebrated on the 15th of Shevat, this year January 22, shows us how important it is to participate in global healing. Tu B'Shevat is the Jewish "Birthday of the Trees."

At Sha'ar Zahav, the tradition is to get our hands dirty by going into the community and planting trees. Please join CSZ Social Action/Tikkun Olam Committee in an effort to heal the planet and the self. We will gather on the morning of January 22 to plant trees with Friends of the Urban Forest. For more information or to RSVP, please call Dahlia Gross, CSZ Program Director (575-4961).

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New Members Song

At a reception for new members, teams of CSZ members wrote songs, sung to the tune of Dreidel, Dreidel, Dreidel.

1. Oh, Tu b'shevat is coming
Though branches now are bare
Mishkan Dolores now has
New palm trees by the stair.
2. Every Friday evening
We gather here to pray
Then eat goodies at the Oneg
Just bought from Safeway.
3. It has a lovely Oneg
With fruits and cakes galore
You may see your future lover
Come walking through the door.
4. Oh, temple, temple, temple
we come from far and near
To pray with other jews
who are straight, bi-sexual and queer.
5. We joined this groovy temple
Not one queer here a snob
And some of us can also say
We're here cuz it's our job.
6. I am a brand new member
I joined just this year
You make me feel so welcome
I know I'll like it here.

January Birthdays

1 Desmond Bernstein	16 Deena Lahn
David Feiger	17 Gabriel Meyer Edlin
Hillel Meyer	18 Sarah Adler
2 Naomi Kosman-Wiener	19 Mike Rankin
3 Kimberly Warsaw	20 Ruby Cymrot-Wu
4 Sarah Goodman	22 Laureen Ok Sun Kim
5 Jonathan Bell	Beth Richman
6 Nathan Robinson	24 Malik Randall
7 Leah Finch	Jonathan Williamson
9 Marius Greenspan	25 Neil Hart
Genevieve Rose	Susan Jacobson
Max Rossoff-Nichols	27 Benjamin Bank
11 Dvora Honigstein	Mike Klayman
12 Tiela Chalmers	Elliot Klein
12 Florence Nacamulli	28 Alexandra Blachman-
13 Alapai Michels	Gentile
14 Michael Schwartz	29 Jacob Montgomery
Louisa Stone	30 Ruth Schoenbach
15 Jacqueline Mauro	31 Nora Downs



Class begins in January in San Francisco

Introduction to Judaism

About this class

Introduction to Judaism provides a wonderful opportunity for individuals and couples wanting to learn more about Judaism. and is required for those considering conversion. During this 12-week introductory course, you will learn about Jewish beliefs, customs, history and community. Interfaith couples are strongly encouraged to take this class together.

Where

Sherith Israel

When

1/13-3/30/00, Thurs 7:00-9:00pm

Instructors: Rabbi Helen Cohn, Rabbi Evan Goodman, Rabbi Stephen Kahn, Rabbi Yoel Kahn.

To register please contact Naomi Horowitz, Introduction to Judaism Registrar, at (415) 392-7080, ext. 17.

Co-sponsored by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, Congregation Beth Israel-Judea, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav, Congregation Emanu-El, and Congregation Sherith Israel.

Dec. Va'ad Minutes

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the year. There is a slowdown in Mishkan pledges perhaps due to accelerated payments from last year. There is little money that we can isolate for improvements, as most building money is money owed. Next year's budget planning is on the horizon. We will have a very tight budgeting session.

President David Gellman gave his report. He also requested suggestions for the Nominations Committee. He needs at least five members.

Va'ad Member Lisa Katz handed out the draft of "Suggested Format for Making Presentations to the Va'ad" which she and Rob Tat developed.

Membership Committee Chair Ami Zusman gave her report. The Va'ad unanimously approved the membership of four new and one returning household.

Administrator Lea Salem gave her report. She noted that we've made our first loan payment on the building, membership dues are increasing and membership is climbing again to 389 households. She gave an overview of the new alarm system; keyholders are advised to talk with her about it.

We sang Oseh Shalom and went home.

New Members

The Membership Committee is pleased to announce that our congregation gained the following new members this month. A warm welcome to the most recent people to join our family:

Shirley Kirsten.
Bernard Schertzer.

We are grateful to see our congregation grow. It is up to all of us to help our new members feel welcome as they become active participants in our community.

Naches

- to Dan Bellm on his second book of poetry, *Buried Treasure*, which has been published by Cleveland State University Press.
- to Gabriele Kassner and Shelley Spiro on their 26th anniversary.
- to Mike Bromberg and Ken Repp on their engagement.
- to Richard Inlander on the marriage of his son, Adam Inlander, to Ginny Garber on December 18 in West Hollywood.

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STEP THREE: Pick up your keys.

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commissions to CSZ

January Anniversaries

- 1 Sharon Tanenbaum and Matrishia Person
- 15 Barbara Becker and Ellen Press
- 16 Ida Kuluk and Susan Spott
- 17 Nancy Igdaloff and Monica Levin
- 23 Stephen Hauptman and Trudi Chamoff Hauptman

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